

Case Study



Developing managers through employee feedback, personalized assessments and online coaching

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Tracy Piper,
Vice President – HR & Talent Management,
DXL Group

The Challenge: Find and engage an easy-to-deploy, online solution for employee and leadership development that can help managers at all levels strengthen their leadership skills.

Destination XL Group, Inc. (DXL), together with its subsidiaries, is the largest omni-channel specialty retailer of big and tall men's apparel, offering thousands of wardrobe styles and choices from hundreds of name brands, including top designers and private labels. The company is headquartered in Canton, Massachusetts, and has more than 300 retail and outlet stores in the United States. The company operates under the names of Destination XL®, DXL Mens Apparel®, DXL®, DXL outlets, Casual Male XL®, Casual Male XL outlets, Rochester Clothing®, ShoesXL® and LivingXL®. It recently opened two new locations in Ontario, Canada, and plans to expand its geographical footprint.

However, DXL realized that achieving efficient, profitable growth involves more than opening the doors on new stores. It also means having effective leaders at all levels who can consistently inspire both individual and team success.

"What we needed – and had been searching for – was an online tool to help us with employee development. This is especially important when it comes to our mid-level managers and high-potential employees, who we want to move into a management role," DXL's Senior Vice President of Human Resources Walter Sprague said.

Tracy Piper, vice president of HR and Talent Management said, "We simply did not have the bandwidth within HR to focus on developing leadership. So, we ultimately concluded that our best option was to go out and choose a solution that meets our requirements."

Stacey Jones, vice president of HR Operations said, "We had been looking at an instructor-led solution that involved a formal classroom environment, but that fell off the radar. It would have taken too much time to set up and administer."

DXL's search for the right solution concluded after their strategic client representative from ADP® introduced the retailer to a unique, collaborative approach – one that is designed to gather employee feedback quickly and anonymously provide online coaching to leaders through a personalized coaching tool, and deliver actionable insights to managers, whether they are in the corporate office or running a retail store.



Headquarters
Canton, MA



Industry
Apparel Retailer



Employees
2,500



Solutions
CompassSM powered by ADP[®]

The Action: DXL selected Compass powered by ADP for leadership development and online coaching.

Compass – an online learning solution – is helping DXL's managers improve their leadership skills fueled by the rich and unvarnished input of anonymous employee engagement.

Using secure and confidential email communications, Compass enables a leader's direct reports and other stakeholders to provide confidential and anonymous feedback to the leader on his or her leadership behaviors and collaborative habits. After receiving a personalized online assessment report, the leader has access to an automated coaching service, with highly focused suggestions for improvement delivered via weekly emails over eight weeks, based upon feedback gathered from team members.

"It was the first time we engaged a program like Compass," Piper said. "It is simple and easy to roll out. Employee surveys result in manager assessments and targeted coaching in the form of quick and helpful information."

"Compass does not burden you with a lot of administrative work to get things going. There was no time-consuming 'implementation' as such. You perform a few tasks like verifying the information of those who would be participating, uploading reports, and you're ready to go. It is a great solution that worked within our resources and budget. Very easy to get started and to administer," Jones said.

"The deeper I go into Compass – for example, how it can help you maintain a consistent relationship with your team members – the more I like it and see its real value for our company. Compass puts you in a position to access employee perceptions you might never have realized, and then use that knowledge to improve yourself and become a better leader," Sprague said.

Learn more about DXL:

<http://www.destinationxl.com/mens-big-and-tall-store/>

The Impact: Anonymous feedback helps leaders learn, improve, and grow.

Sprague estimated that about 80 percent of designated DXL employees provided online feedback, which included solid participation from DXL's merchant group. "That's a pretty good number, particularly when you consider Compass feedback and coaching all took place during the third and fourth quarters, probably our busiest time of year."

DXL Senior Vice President Frank Chane said the coaching support from Compass was direct, uncomplicated, and useful. "In fact, I printed out each set of emailed coaching comments I received from Compass, because those very basic and simple tips helped reinforce what I've always believed – greater success begins with self-improvement."

// I have always placed a high value on receiving feedback from peers and direct reports. The Compass tool is one of the easiest ways for a manager, at any level, to acquire this kind of high-value feedback that can help make you a better leader. //

Walter Sprague
Senior VP – Human Resources, DXL Group

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